

# 2004 Report of Accomplishments

## Walla Walla County Conservation District

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### Natural Resource Improvements in 2004 – Summary

- *Construction has begun on our third Irrigation Efficiency project and the fourth will be installed in spring 2005.*
- *The District helped landowners install 97 fish screens to protect endangered species.*
- *Over 477 acres of riparian buffers were planted this year, adding 18 stream miles for a program total of 112 stream miles.*
- *The Sediment Reduction program enrollment of 2,000 acres resulted in reducing erosion and sediment transfer to area waterways by an estimated 342 tons of sediment.*



### Mission of the Walla Walla County Conservation District

- *WWCCD is dedicated to the conservation and restoration of the natural resources of Walla Walla County, facilitated by working on a voluntary basis with landowners to identify opportunities and create solutions, while consistently providing education, information, and assistance whenever possible.*

### Water Quality Implementation

- *Water Quality funds were used to leverage state funds at a 1 to 4 ratio to ensure the success of three district programs.*
  - *This year we completed the Four Schools project, installing riparian buffers and making in-stream improvements to critical streams that run through local school district properties. The project reduces chemical runoff, improves water quality, and provides state of the art in-stream habitat for endangered fish using the waterway, as well as providing an outdoor classroom.*
  - *The sediment reduction program is reducing sediment transfer to area waterways at a rate of 342 tons per year.*
  - *Water Quality funds provide program matching funds for the Screening program.*

### Basic Funding

- *Basic Funding dollars made it possible for the District to provide services to landowners and our conservation partners. For example, we are actively engaged in the Environmental Quality Incentive Program with NRCS. Our role is to co-lead the Local Work Group and assist in producer sign-ups. There is over \$1,000,000.00 earmarked for the Snake River Region—federal dollars that will flow directly into the local economy if area landowners participate. Basic Funding makes it possible for the District to participate in and promote programs like these.*

### Irrigation Efficiencies

- *Our third project will save over one cubic foot per second in Mill Creek. This represents water left in the river to directly benefit the endangered fish species in the basin—both Steelhead and Bull Trout.*
  - *140 acres will be converted to efficient pivot irrigation*
  - *One and a half miles of water-wasting open ditch will be converted to buried pipe.*
- *Our three irrigation efficiencies projects save nearly 13 cubic feet per second, and this water has been placed in the Trust program to maintain flows in the Walla Walla River:*

### Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP)

- *Under the CREP program, we added over 477 acres of buffers bringing our program total to 2223 acres.*

- *Native grasses and over 217,000 trees and shrubs were planted. Our state funds of \$117,000.00 for new buffer installation matched federal funds of over \$1,170,000.00.*
- *The District provided maintenance for over 2,230 acres of riparian forest buffers, following NRCS standards to ensure plant survival during the first two critical years following installation. Several regional tours featured our sites as some of the best examples of riparian buffer restoration on the east side of the state.*

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## **Water-Conservation**

- *We are currently completing the design for a project that convert 5.4 miles of open ditch to closed pipeline for the Lowden 2 Irrigation District. This project was funded through a special appropriation for conveyance infrastructure improvement.*

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## **Family Farm Programs: Screens, Meters, and Sediment Reduction Program**

- *All irrigators are required to install an approved fish screen. Our screening program has provided cost-share to install 207 WDFW-approved fish screens. In addition, we have completed 400 screen assessments and 300 screen designs.*
- *Our Sediment Reduction program helps landowners begin low disturbance tillage. With 2000 acres enrolled in the program, an estimated 342 tons of sediment per year are kept out of area waterways.*
- *Irrigators are also required to install water meters to comply with state regulations. Under our metering program we have provided cost share to install 46 water meters. This year we had another 28 landowners sign up and completed 96 designs.*

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## **Community Collaboration & Coordination**

- *The District is involved in multiple endangered species planning forums representing area stakeholders. These planning forums include Bi-State Habitat Conservation Planning, Walla Walla Watershed Planning, Snake River Salmon Recovery Planning and Walla Walla Sub-basin Planning.*
- *The District runs the burn-permit program in cooperation with Walla Walla County and DOE.*

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## **Information & Education**

- *Thanks to the generous contributions of local businesses, the District was able to send seven students to the Inland Empire Natural Resources Youth Camp.*
- *We compiled the county yearly rainfall data, a service highly valued by area producers.*
- *We held a contractor-training workshop to explain the latest NRCS standards for riparian buffer installation.*
- *We coordinated a community outreach program for three agencies to promote their water-leasing program.*
- *We assisted the Northwest Power Planning Council in a tour of restoration projects.*
- *We assisted local entities in preparation of 8 applications for SRFB funding.*
- *We published three newsletters with a circulation of over 1,100.*

## **Washington Conservation Districts--assisting land managers with their conservation choices**



*Stiller Irrigation  
Efficiency Project,  
pipeline installation*

